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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

Islam – Facts or Dreams?

By Andrew C. McCarthy

In 1993 I was a seasoned federal prosecutor assigned to lead the investigation of a terrorist cell that had bombed the World Trade Center. I had no trouble believing what our government was saying: that we should read nothing into the fact that all the men in this terrorist cell were Muslims; and that to the extent that they were explaining their atrocities by citing Islamic scripture, they were twisting and perverting one of the world's great religions, a religion that encourages peace.

Unlike commentators and government press secretaries, I had to examine these claims....And in examining the claims, I found them false.

One of the first things I learned concerned the leader of the terrorist cell, Omar Abdel Rahman, infamously known as the Blind Sheik. Our government was portraying him as a wanton killer who was lying about Islam by preaching that it summoned Muslims to jihad or holy war. Far from a lunatic, however, he turned out to be a globally renowned scholar – a doctor of Islamic jurisprudence who graduated from al-Azhar University, the seat of Sunni Islamic learning for over a millennium. His area of expertise was sharia – Islamic law.

I immediately began to wonder why officials from President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno on down, who had no background in Muslim doctrine and culture, believed they knew more about Islam than the Blind Sheik.

If what we were saying as a government were true – that he was perverting Islam – then there must two or three places where I could nail him

by saying, "You told your follower X but the doctrine clearly says Y." So my colleagues and I pored over the Blind Sheik's many writings. And what we found was alarming: whenever he quoted the Koran or other sources of Islamic scripture, he quoted them accurately. Abdul Rahman was not lying about Islam.

When he said the scriptures command that Muslims strike terror into the hearts of Islam's enemies, the scriptures backed him up.

When he said Allah enjoined all Muslims to wage jihad until Islamic law was established throughout the world, the scriptures backed him up.

When he said Islam directed Muslims not to take Jews and Christians as their friends, the scriptures backed him up.

The fact that there are multiple ways of construing Islam hardly makes the Blind Sheik's literal construction wrong. The blunt fact of the matter is that, in this contest of competing interpretations, it is the jihadists who seem to be making sense because they have the words of scripture on their side – it is the others who seem to be dancing on the head of a pin. The Blind Sheik's summons to jihad was rooted in a coherent interpretation of Islamic doctrine. He was not perverting Islam – he was, if anything, shining a light on the need to reform it.

Another point, obvious but inconvenient, is that Islam is not a religion of peace. Verses such as "Fight those who believe not in Allah," and "Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, and beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war," are not peaceful injunctions.

What about Islamic law? On this point it is useful to turn to Robert

Jackson, FDR's attorney general, Supreme Court justice and chief prosecutor of the war crimes trials at Nuremberg. In the foreword to a book called *Law in the Middle East*, he wrote, "[Islamic law's] features relative to our law are not likenesses but inconsistencies, not similarities but contrarieties. In its scope and its sanctions, the law of the Middle East is the antithesis of Western law."

Sharia rejects freedom of speech as much as freedom of religion. It rejects equal rights between men and women as much as between Muslim and non-Muslim. It brooks no separation between spiritual life and civil society. It is a comprehensive framework for human life, dictating matters of government, economy and combat, along with personal behavior such as contact between the sexes and personal hygiene. Sharia aims to rule both believers and non-believers, and it affirmatively sanctions jihad to do so.

Habitually I distinguish between Islam and Muslims. The Muslims I encountered when working on national security cases were pro-American patriots who helped us infiltrate terror cells, disrupt mass murder plots and gather the evidence needed to convict jihadists. We have an obligation to our principles not to convict by association – not to confound our Islamist enemies with our Muslim allies and fellow citizens.

To quote Winston Churchill, "Facts are better than dreams." In the real world, we must deal with the facts of Islamic supremacism, because its jihadist legions have every intention of dealing with us. But we can only defeat them if we resolve to see them for what they are. -- Imprimis, February 2016

UK activists expose illegal 'Sharia Law' court

Muslim immigrants create their own state within a state

By Kit Daniels

A shocking video shows activists exposing a Sharia Law court operating inside London – and outside British law.

The court, publicly known as the "Islamic Sharia Council," is one of an estimated 100 Sharia law courts carrying out legal matters in the UK in accordance to Islamic law.

"These Sharia courts are popping up all over Britain and they are usurping our own legal system we have in this country," activist and mayoral candidate Paul Golding said in the video. "All of these Sharia courts need to be closed down immediately."

The activists pointed out a divorce proceedings flowchart posted on the wall of the court, and later a miniature courtroom is shown complete with Islamic law books and a desk for the Muslim judge, known as a qadi, to sit and preside over cases.

"They're building a state within a state – their own legal system, laws, regulations and everything," Golding added. "A lot of people have fought and died [for our country], yet these people come into our country and set up their own legal system."

The Arbitration Act of 1996 does allow Muslims to mediate certain civil disputes in accordance to Sharia law, but now these Sharia courts are usurping power by claiming they can make legally binding decisions outside the British legal system.

"I feel betrayed by Britain," a Muslim woman revealed. "I came here to get away from this and the situation is worse here than in the country I escaped from."

And Muslims who refuse to participate in a Sharia court are targeted for intimidation or even violence.

"Though the Sharia Council is not yet legally recognized by the authorities in the UK, the fact that it is already established, and is gradually gaining ground among the Muslim community, and the satisfaction attained by those who seek its ruling, are all preparatory steps towards the final goal of gaining the confidence of the host community in the soundness of the Islamic legal system and the help and insight they could gain from it," the Leyton Sharia Council proudly proclaims. "The experience gained by the scholars taking part in its procedures make them more prepared

for the eventuality of recognition for Islamic law."

-- infowars.com April 25, 2016

Jihadist 'emir': "Come, brother, let's go to paradise, our women are waiting"

(Paris, AFP) - A French journalist infiltrated a cell of would-be jihadists, filming them with a hidden camera as they plotted an attack in the name of the Islamic State group, before they were arrested, he told AFP.

The journalist, a Muslim using the pseudonym Said Ramzi, carried out the investigation for a documentary entitled "Allah's Soldiers" which gives an insight into the minds of young jihadists.

Ramzi describes himself as a Muslim "of the same generation as the killers" who carried out the November 13 terror attacks which left 130 people dead in Paris.

"My goal was to understand what was going on inside their heads," he told AFP.

To make contact with the group, Ramzi said the first steps were easy, following and interacting with those preaching jihad on Facebook.

Then, he had to meet the person presented as the "emir" of the group of about a dozen youths, some of them born into Muslim families, and the others converts.

This took place in Chateauroux, a town in the centre-west of France, at an outdoor activities centre that was deserted in winter.

The "emir" was a young French-Turkish citizen named Oussama, and on their first meeting he tries to convince the journalist that paradise awaits him if he carries out a suicide mission.

"Towards paradise, that is the path," Oussama says, a chilling smile on his face. "Come, brother, let's go to paradise, our women [houris] are waiting for us there, with angels as servants.

"You will have a palace, a winged horse of gold and rubies."

-- "French journalist infiltrates jihadist cell for six months", AFP May 1, 2016

Note: Regardless of the gender of the houris themselves, the Quran does state that in Heaven, all believers would be granted not only the eternal company of houris, but also that of "boys of perpetual freshness", as stated in two different verses of the Quran (52:24 and 56:17).

-- en.wikipedia.org

A Gun-Storing Tactical Wall That Hides in Plain Sight

By Timothy Dahl

Home defense requires a compartment to store firearms that is secure but also accessible. This rules out most wall and floor safes, as they can be difficult to get to at night and just aren't very convenient to use. A tactical wall solves this issue and can be installed in less than an hour.

The 1450M bundle from Tactical Walls is a recessed in-wall storage solution that hides a hidden wall cavity behind a full-length mirror. When unlocked by an RFID card, the mirror slides open to reveal two compartments that can be used to store rifles, handguns, ammunition, or gear and valuables. This tactical wall is made in the United States and built from baltic birch and poplar. The mirror is backed by plywood and encased in a full hardwood frame.

The installation is demonstrated below by YouTuber 13C Gun Reviews. Start by measuring and cutting a hole in the wall between your 16-inch on center studs. Next, mount the cover. After attaching your firearm retention magnets to the back of your insert, slide the insert into the hole. The 1-inch lip of the insert will hide any irregular edges left by your cuts. You can customize your tactical wall by adding additional shelves, LED lights, or hangers.

To open the unit, simply slide your RFID card over the lock mechanism and pull the mirror to the side. The RFID card is the size of a credit card and can be stored in a book or envelope that you can keep tucked away but within easy reach.

-- Popular Mechanics April 28, 2016

16 Most Notorious Hillary Clinton Scandals (#5-8)

With the spotlight now on Hillary and her presidential campaign, pundits and opponents have rebuked the former First Lady for her proven track record of scandalous dealings, both past and present. She may just have a knack for being in the wrong place, at the wrong time; or maybe there's more to Hillary's past....

Do these scandals make Hillary fit for the role of commander in chief? Check out Hillary's 16 most notorious scandals and decide for yourself.

5. Vince Foster scandal. This chap, a well-known Arkansas lawyer, was a childhood friend of Bill Clinton and also worked closely with Hillary at Rose Law Firm. When Bill became President he

became the deputy White House counsel. Foster was known to suffer from depression and in 1993 he allegedly committed suicide. Most said it was suicide, while many claimed it had something to do with Hillary and Bill and some foul play.

6. Jorge Cabrera scandal. Jorge Cabrera was a supporter of the Democrats in the mid-90s and even wrote them a personal check of \$20,000. During that time he was even seen in pictures, taken by the press along with the then-First Lady. However, just a few short months later Cabrera was arrested in a drug bust in Miami and was given 19 years behind bars.

7. Sniper fire scandal. When she was First Lady, Hillary went on an official visit to Bosnia and met with American troops stationed there. On her return she told the press that she had herself come under sniper fire and could have been killed at the airport. Just one week later Hillary took back those comments claiming she had made a mistake in the recounting of what actually happened.

8. Personal email scandal. When she was Secretary of State, Hillary used a personal email address but used it to conduct official business. She allegedly used her personal email to conduct all of her official business. She claimed she never used her personal email to send or receive classified information but no one is sure of the real truth about this scandal.

-- -- lifedaily.com/16-most-notorious-hillary-clinton-scandals

Ed.: next month, Hillary scandals 9 to 12.

NSA and CIA Double Their Warrantless Searches on Americans in Two Years

By Jenna McLaughlin

From 2013 to 2015, the NSA and CIA doubled the number of warrantless searches of Americans' data in a massive NSA database ostensibly collected for foreign intelligence purposes, according to a new intelligence community transparency report.

The estimated number of search terms "concerning a known U.S. person" within what is known as the 702 database was 4,672 — more than double the 2013 figure, excluding FBI database searches.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court has ruled that the FBI is allowed to run any number of searches it wants on that database, not only for national security probes but

also for evidence of traditional crimes. No estimates have ever been released of how often that happens.

Under Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the NSA collects hundreds of millions of digital communications at rest and in transit from internet backbones running in and out of the U.S., as well as from Google, Facebook, YouTube, and other companies, involving "targets" overseas.

Americans' communications are constitutionally protected from warrantless searches, but when those communications are swept up by the NSA "incidentally" to its main goal, those protections have been essentially ignored.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence has said the practice of searching the database for American communications is not "unlawful" because the content is collected legitimately in the first place — and because there are protections against sharing Americans' identities unless it's absolutely necessary.

But lawmakers including Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Rep. Thomas Massie, (R-KY) describe this practice as a "backdoor" search because it's a way to gather evidence on Americans without getting court approval.

"If intelligence officials are deliberately searching for and reading the communications of specific Americans, the Constitution requires a warrant," said Wyden in a press release in June 2014.

The ODNI director of legislative affairs, Deidre M. Walsh, wrote in a 2013 letter to Wyden that the NSA approved 198 searches, or "queries," for the content of American communications in the 702 database — while the CIA approved "fewer than 1900".

That's the number that more than doubled in 2015.

However, the number of queries for metadata — information about who the communications are to and from rather than their content — also went up dramatically.

According to the 2014 letter to Wyden, NSA conducted "approximately 9,500 queries" of American metadata in 2013, including repeated queries — excluding CIA searches, because the agency doesn't track that information.

In 2015, the ODNI reported 23,800 searches on metadata — excluding "one IC element" — presumably the CIA.

The missing data from the FBI is of great concern to privacy advocates. The USA Freedom Act,

passed in June 2015, "conspicuously exempts the FBI" from disclosing how often it searches the 702 database, the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) wrote in a letter to the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, in October 2015.

"There is every reason to believe the number of FBI queries far exceeds those of the CIA and NSA," POGO wrote.

The new report also leaves unanswered how many Americans' communications are collected in the first place.

The House Judiciary Committee sent Clapper a letter on April 22 demanding to know how often programs authorized under Section 702 vacuum up communications belonging to innocent Americans.

-- The Intercept May 4, 2016

Secret Spy Court Approved Every Surveillance in 2015

By David Kravets

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, the one that NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden revealed is allowing the government to obtain the metadata of every phone call to and from the US, approved every surveillance request from US authorities in 2015.

Reuters news service, which reviewed a secret document outlining the figures, reported [May 2] that the FISA Court granted every one of the 1,457 surveillance applications last year. The scope of the surveillance is unknown but vast. A single application is all it takes for the FISA Court to require the nation's telcos to scoop up and retain the telephone metadata on all phone calls. The court, based in the District of Columbia and whose members are appointed by the Supreme Court's chief justice, approved every one of the 1,379 applications for the year 2014 as well.

The memo said the FISA Court, which was created in 1978 with the stated goal of acquiring intelligence on foreign suspects, had modified 80 warrant applications last year, up from 19 the year before.

The memo said the FBI issued 48,642 National Security Letters last year, which closely aligns with figures from a decade ago.

The NSLs are issued to banks, ISPs, car dealers, insurance companies, doctors, and others. The letters, which demand personal information, don't need a judge's signature and come with a gag to the recipient that generally forbids the

disclosure of the NSL to the public or the target. These subpoenas are considered to comport with the Fourth Amendment, as the courts have generally stated that the information sought in the letters is a business record not protected by the Constitution.

-- Ars Technica, May 6, 2016

Proofs Democrats Are on Verge of Gun Confiscation

By AWR HAWKINS

FrontPage Mag published an article Monday that provides proofs that Democrats are on the verge of a sweeping gun confiscation push.

*A new healthcare rule "allowing health care [sic] providers to report the names of mentally ill patients to an FBI firearms background check system." FrontPage predicts "mentally ill" will begin to be applied to "any fervent adherence to the Constitution, homeschooling, and climate change 'denial,'" in order to disarm gun owners.

* Obama's January 5 executive gun controls included the addition of 200 new ATF agents and 230 FBI personnel to "enforce our gun laws" and help process background checks. The Washington Examiner pointed out that these new federal positions are a force "more than eight times" the number of special forces taking on ISIS in the Middle East.

* Calls for bans on semiautomatic weapons. The Washington Post's Eugene Volokh explained, "These are calls for banning the sorts of guns that tens of millions of law-abiding Americans have in their homes." Volokh explains the progression – from seeking a ban on "Saturday Night Specials" in the 1970s to the possession of semiautomatic weapons now.

Confiscation is already underway in California. FrontPage reports that "California Attorney General and anti-gun extremist Kamala Harris recently announced that over the last two years her Department had 'doubled the average number of guns seized annually.'"

California goes about confiscation by using many of the tools Democrats are putting in place at the federal level—such as incrementally expanding the list of prohibited guns, then using those expansions to allow law enforcement to visit homes and round up firearms.

-- www.breitbartnews.com 2016/01/25

"Oppositional Defiant Disorder"

By American Infidel

Americans critical of government could have their Second Amendment rights restricted if psychologists diagnose them with "Oppositional Defiant Disorder" or a similar diagnosis as a result of Obama's new gun control executive action.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which the American Psychiatric Association uses for psychiatric diagnosis, defines "oppositional defiant disorder" as a "recurrent pattern of negativistic, defiant, disobedient, and hostile behavior toward authority figures" which typically begins at a young age but can survive into adulthood.

"[Adults with Oppositional Defiant Disorder] feel misunderstood and disliked, hemmed in and pushed around," according to Russell Barkley, Ph.D. "Some feel like mavericks or rebels."

In other words, an Obama-supporting psychologist could potentially diagnose conservatives and libertarians with "Oppositional Defiant Disorder" due to their criticism of authority, particularly the federal government, and then report them to the FBI as too "mentally unfit" to purchase a gun.

But even scarier, the newest version of the DSM-5 is so broad that almost every form of human behavior could be considered some type of mental illness. In fact, over the past 50 years, the number of mental illnesses defined by sequential editions of the DSM have grown from 130 to over 350. -- www.freedomdaily.com

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Ed.: can Jersey be far behind?

America Doesn't Have a Gun Problem, It Has a Democrat Problem

By Daniel Greenfield

America's mass shooting capital isn't somewhere out west, it's Chicago, Obama's own hometown.

Chicago is America's mass shooting capital, where 2,995 people were shot last year.

Shootings were way up in Baltimore. Baltimore beat out Detroit, but Detroit is still in the running. All three cities have something in common: the party of gun control, which, somehow, can't seem to manage to control the criminals who have the guns.

The murder rate in Washington, D.C., home of the progressive boys and girls who can solve it all, is up 54%.

These cities are the heartland of America's real gun culture, Obama's own voting base.

Gun violence is at its worst in the cities that Obama won in 2012—places like New Orleans, Memphis, Birmingham, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Philly (though not Seattle). Yet the Democrats blame Republicans for the crimes of their own voters.

Chicago's murder rate of 15.09 per 100,000 people looks nothing like the American 4.2 rate. But St. Louis, with 50 murders for 100,000 people is worse.

Obama won St. Louis 82 to 16 percent.

Homicide rates like these show that something is broken, but it isn't broken among Republican voters rushing to stock up on rifles every time Obama begins threatening their right to buy them; it's broken among Obama's base.

America is, on a county by county basis, not a violent country, just as it, on a county by county basis, did not vote for Obama. It is being dragged down by broken cities full of broken families whose mayors would like to trash the Bill of Rights for the entire country in the vain hope that national gun control will save their cities, even though gun control is likely to be as much help to Chicago or New Orleans as the War on Drugs.

America does not have a gun problem. Its problem is in the broken culture of cities administered by Democrats. We do not need to have a conversation about gun violence. We need to have a conversation about Chicago. We need to have a conversation about what the Democrats have done to our cities.

-- freedomoutpost.com January 8, 2016

The First Amendment Guide to the Second Amendment

By David Kopel
Back in 1995, the Tennessee Law Review published a

symposium issue on the Second Amendment and firearms policy. That symposium was probably the most influential law review symposium ever published on the topic.

Some of the 1995 articles are available at the Second Amendment Law Library section of www.guncite.com. The article with the most enduring relevance is probably Stephen Halbrook's "Congress Interprets the Second Amendment" detailing various legislation expressly protecting the individual Second Amendment right to arms. The Halbrook article was the first to discuss the 1941 Property Requisition Act, which expressly forbade the seizure or registration of firearms for national defense.

Don Kates, Henry Schaffer, John Lattimer, George Murray, and Edwin Cassem wrote a huge article, "Guns and Public Health: Epidemic of Violence or Pandemic of Propaganda?" which deconstructed the "public health" argument for gun prohibition, and some of the very poor-quality research on it which had been funded with tax dollars.

Finally, there was Glenn Reynolds's "A Critical Guide to the Second Amendment" which summarized the "standard model" that had become the norm among most (although not all) Second Amendment scholars; the standard model would later be adopted by Heller. The Second Amendment guarantees the right of the individual to own and carry firearms, including handguns. The right aims to promote the militia, but the right is not dependent on the militia. Some non-prohibitory regulations are constitutional. (Reynolds offered his own list of such controls, but whether he was right about any particular item on the list is less important than his general point that the Second Amendment does not forbid all gun control.)

This year, the Tennessee Law Review is doing another Second Amendment symposium. My contribution to the forthcoming issue is "The First Amendment Guide to the Second Amendment."

As the article explains, post-Heller courts have frequently looked to the First Amendment for guidance on Second Amendment questions. This is sensible, because since the Supreme Court began taking the First Amendment seriously about 75 years ago, a rich body of precedent has been developed. The First and Second Amendments both safeguard natural, pre-existing human rights, whereas Amendments 4-8 are mainly controls

on particular government processes, and Amendments 9-10 are interpretive rules...-- The Volokh Conspiracy April 21, 2014

Obama excuses Muslims for sins of a few, denies same courtesy to gun owners

By AWR Hawkins

During a February 2 visit to the Islamic Society of Baltimore, President Obama said, "As Muslim Americans... your entire community so often is targeted or blamed for the violent acts of the very few."

Yet when a gunman killed 9 innocents in a gun-free zone at Umpqua Community College, Obama called for more gun control for all gun owners.

Think about it—the president who says, "the violent acts of the very few" Muslims should not be held against the majority of Muslims is subsequently seizing on "the violent acts" of a "very few" gun owners and holding those actions against the millions of gun owners who never have—nor ever will—misuse a gun.
-- www.breitbart.com February 3, 2016

Man wearing hand gun open carry robbed

By Sarah J. Ketchum

Newport News police are investigating after a man reported he was pushed to the ground and had his handgun stolen.

Officers responded to a report of the robbery in the 6000 block of Jefferson Avenue just before 8 p.m. Jan. 29, according to police spokesman Harold Eley.

The victim, a 37-year-old Hampton man, told police he was robbed as he walked to the lot at the Windsor House. He was wearing his handgun in a holster, open carry, on his hip, Eley said.

The man said he was approached from behind by two men. One grabbed the gun from the holster and pushed him to the ground. Both men fled on foot southbound toward the trailer parks, Eley said.

-- dailypress.com February 2, 2016

Illegal Immigrants Get More Welfare Than American Families

The households of illegal immigrants receive an average of about \$1,000 more annually in federal welfare benefits than do the households of non-immigrant recipients, a new analysis finds.

According to the immigration control advocacy group, Center for Immigration Studies, which breaks down federal cost data from 2012, the welfare payout to likely illegal immigrant households averages \$5,692 yearly, compared with the average \$4,431 welfare payout to non-immigrant households collecting the benefit.

The CIS analysis study points out illegal immigrants are barred from directly receiving welfare, but may obtain it through their U.S.-born children.

All immigrant-headed households — legal and illegal — receive an average of \$6,241 in welfare, 41 percent more than the \$4,431 received by a non-immigrant household on welfare, according to the analysis.

The total cost is over \$103 billion in welfare benefits to households headed by immigrants. A majority, 51 percent, receive some type of welfare compared with 30 percent of non-immigrant U.S. households, the analysis shows.

Immigrants receiving the most in the study of 2012 figures come from Mexico and Central America, which collect an average of \$8,251 yearly, 86 percent higher than the benefits used by non-immigrant households, the analysis finds.

The breakdown also shows the average immigrant household collects 33 percent more cash welfare, 57 percent more food assistance, and 44 percent more in Medicaid dollars than the average non-immigrant household collecting those benefits.

Housing costs are about the same for both groups.

While it is important for Americans to understand the rate of welfare use among immigrants, expressing that use in dollar terms offers a more tangible metric that is tied to current debates over fiscal policy. With the nation facing a long-term budgetary deficit, this study helps illuminate immigration's impact on the problem," report author Jason Richwine writes. -- newsmax.com 09 May 2016

U.S. Army Captain Is Suing Obama Over Legality of War Against ISIS

A U.S. Army captain has filed a lawsuit against President Obama over the legality of the war against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

Capt. Nathan Michael Smith, 28, who is currently on active duty in Kuwait, filed the lawsuit Wednesday in

U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. He argues that the war is illegal because it lacks congressional authorization.

He says the ongoing military action violates the 1973 War Powers Act. "Under the War Powers Act, every time [a president] notifies leaders of military strikes, his power to carry them out without congressional approval extends another 60 days," as NPR's David Welna has reported.

Smith's lawsuit argues that "The President did not get Congress's approval for his war against ISIS in Iraq or Syria within the sixty days, but he also did not terminate the war. The war is therefore illegal. The Court should issue a declaration that the War Powers Resolution requires the President to obtain a declaration or war or specific authorization from Congress within sixty days of the judgement, and that his failure to do so will require disengagement, within thirty days, of all United States armed forces from the war against ISIS in Iraq and Syria."

Smith's lawsuit contends that the president has "exceeded his authority" under the 2001 and 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force, because the Islamic State played no part in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Obama has said that he is acting according to his "constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief." Last year, however, his administration sent Congress "a request for formal authorization to use military force against the extremist group."

This lawsuit claims that the president's powers do not override the obligation to "obtain from Congress a declaration of war or specific statutory authorization in order to wage the war against ISIS."

-- NPR News May 5, 2016

Good Home Wanted

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Declassified documents detail 9/11 commission's inquiry into Saudi Arabia

Barack Obama has said he is nearing a decision on whether to declassify 28 pages of the 9/11 Commission Report, a move that has led to the first serious public split among the 9/11 commissioners since they issued a final report in 2004. The commission's former chairman and vice chairman have urged caution in releasing the congressional report, suggesting it could do damage to US-Saudi relations and smear innocent people, while several of the other commissioners have called for the 28 pages to be made public, saying the report could reveal leads about the Saudis that still need to be pursued.

Earlier this week, a Republican commissioner, former navy secretary John F Lehman, said there was clear evidence that Saudi government employees were part of a support network [in California] for the 9/11 hijackers – an allegation, congressional officials have confirmed, that is addressed in detail in the 28 pages.

In an interview Thursday, Lehman said that while he had not meant to his comments to suggest any deep disagreements among the 10 commissioners about their investigation, he stood by his view – directly contradicting the commission's chairman and vice-chairman – that "there was an awful lot of participation by Saudi individuals in supporting the hijackers, and some of those people worked in the Saudi government".

"The 9/11 investigation was terminated before all the relevant leads were able to be investigated," he said. "I believe these leads should be vigorously pursued. I further believe that the relevant 28 pages from the congressional report should be released, redacting only the names of individuals and certain leads that have been proven false."

-- theguardian.com 2016 May 13

The Trump-Loving 'Alt Right' Turns to Guns

By Alex Yablon

The self-described "alt right" is a confrontational strain of conservative thought that has recently crept out of the shadowy online precincts. The latest entry to the genre is "An Establishment Conservative's Guide to the Alt-Right" co-authored by the movement's most prominent figurehead, a British writer named Milo Yiannopoulos.

Yiannopoulos presents a stark alternative to the staid Heritage Foundation set. Openly gay, sporting a shock of blond hair and boasting nearly 200,000 Twitter followers, Yiannopoulos has sworn allegiance to Trump, whom he calls "Daddy." Recently, he circulated a photo of himself holding an AK-47 and a Louis Vuitton handbag, while wearing a suit and a camouflage "Make America Great Again" hat.

If the alt right has a coherent credo, it's to wage war on what it sees as politically correct speech and thought. The movement's members seem to latch onto certain ideas and images due to the outrage they cause. This explains how Trump, who embraced the politics of divisiveness long before the Internet even existed, has become an alt-right folk hero. It also accounts for the alt right's embrace of guns and gun imagery.

Yiannopoulos seems to relish the iconography of firearms for the reasons that drive much of his public life: They are fraught symbols with the power to piss off other people. The alt right's adherents don't often invoke the "first freedom" talking point, the heritage of sportsmen, or the need for self-defense — the rhetoric used by groups like the National Rifle Association. For Yiannopoulos and much of the rest of the alt right, guns are a locus of symbolic conflict, yet another means of provocation.

The lineage of the alt right itself can be traced back at least to the "South Park Conservative" sensibility that emerged during the 2000s: As co-creator Matt Stone said, "I hate conservatives but I really fucking hate liberals." -- www.thetrace April 3, 2016

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